Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Ruston School

Property ID: 103709

Location

Address: 5219 N Shirley St, Ruston, Washington, 98407

Tax No/Parcel No: 4655200190

Plat/Block/Lot: Section 23 Township 21 Range 02 Quarter 12 HOWARD

Geographic Areas: Pierce County, ORCHARDS Quadrangle, T21R02E23, Congressional District 6, 27

Information

Number of stories:

Construction Dates:

Construction Type	Year	Circa
Built Date	1922	☐
Addition	1950	☑

Historic Use:

Category	Subcategory
Education	Education - Education Related
Education	Education - Education Related

Historic Context:

Category
Architecture

Architect/Engineer:

Category	Name or Company
Architect	Hill, Mock & Griffin

Thematics:

Local Registers and Districts

Name	Date Listed	Notes

Project History

Project Number, Organization, Project Name	Resource Inventory	SHPO Determination	SHPO Determined By, Determined Date
2010-04-00035, , Pierce County		Not Determined	
2011-06-00083, , Assessors Data Project: Pierce County 6		Not Determined	
2024-06-04525, , Mary Joyce Community Ctr. Repair and ADA Access		Determined Eligible	Maureen Elenga, 6/27/2024

Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Ruston School

Property ID: 103709

Photos

front facade.

CALL FOR BIDS ON NEW $65,000 RUSTON SCHOOL

Architects Finish Plans for Attractive Eight-Room Building

Bids have been called for the estimates on the construction of the new school at Ruston, according to an announcement made last week by Hill, Mock & Griffin, architects. They have prepared the plans for the building and will have supervision of its construction. The bids will be opened May 6.

The building will be erected this year on a site adjoining the present building. As soon as the new building is completed, the old one will be removed.

The new building will cover an area 76x140 feet and will be one story high, with high basement. The exterior will be finished in brick and the interior in frame construction.

Eight classrooms are provided for, with a large gymnasium and auditorium combined. All the most modern school equipment will be provided for the new building, which will be ready for occupancy some time next winter.

It is estimated that the building will cost in the neighborhood of $65,000 when completed.

The architects also announced last week that plans have been completed for the Rhodes Lake school near Alderton. This building will be constructed of tile and will cost approximately $3,000. The old school was destroyed by fire recently.

Ruston_5.jpg

RUSTON SCHOOL OPENS ON SEPT. 5

New Structure Will Not Be Ready for Use

TACOMA, Aug. 30.—The Ruston school will open Tuesday, September 5. School will be called in the old building as the new structure will not be completed for a month. The new school house was to have been ready for use by the first of September, but as yet the basement hos not been plastered nor the attic sealed.

L. C. Stwalley will be the principal this year and the staff of teachers will include Miss Lucile Floyd, Mrs. Arthur Espeland, Mrs. Ivah Jane Murray and Mrs. Lou Miller.

Ruston_4.jpg

50 Years Old

Ruston School, Like Good Wine, Improving With Age

By RICHARD FERGUSON

Ruston Elementary School is 50 years old this fall and getting better with age. At least that is the opinion of Rodney Larson, and he should know.

Larson, 57, has been principal since 1947. In fact, he began his career there in 1946.

He taught half a day at Ruston and the other half at University Place Grade School. That went on for two years.

Then the young bachelor joined the Army, serving in Europe during World War II.

When he returned from the war, he was hired by the Ruston School Board as principal. The job, then and now, involves some teaching.

The tall white-haired administrator seemed to enjoy talking about the "old days" when he coached Ruston's athletic teams, which competed with other grade schools in the county — University Place, Stellacoom, Riverside, Firwood, Midland and Edgemont to name a few.

The interior of his red brick school was modernized this year in a $220,000 project which was completed just this week.

In connection with the renovation, the school was rededicated Wednesday night. It was a high point of Larson's career.

"I have wanted for some time to see the building modernized to meet the standards of present-day education," he said in an interview. "We just weren't there before. You can't imagine how drab and dreary it was before."

Larson wasn't knocking the old building. He said the "new" facility, complete with carpeted classrooms and special walls which can be opened to allow for team teaching, provides a good learning environment for the children of today and that the old building did the same for those of previous generations.

For the first time the school has a library. "We had a room we called a library," he said, "but it was just a room that held some books."

Education has changed drastically during Larson's three decades as an educator. He believes that it has been for the better for the most part.

"The kids are progressing much faster. They are doing things in the sixth grade that we were doing in the eighth 15 or 20 years ago," he said.

While some complain that today's children can't read, Larson says his school has many excellent readers — "not that we didn't before" — "and I am sure you would find that the same to be true throughout the district."

Ruston has been part of the Tacoma school system since 1907. Until then it was operated as a one-school district.

The building actually is the third to house Ruston School, which was established about the turn of the century. The first was a one-room structure at North 31st and Winnifred and the second a four-room facility just north of the present site, North 32nd and Shirley streets.

Three principals have served the latest building, Mrs. Lou Miller from 1959-65 and Ambrose Johnstone for a year between Mrs. Miller and Larson.

Vital Statistics

Marriage Licenses

Marriage license applications have been issued by County Auditor Robert L. Hartley to the following: Donald L. Smith, 402 South Baker Road W., and Dora L. Davis, 69 S. G.; Everett Hurley, at County Clerk's office, and Mary Ann Ellis, 19, Howard Logan Jr. and Shirley A. Parker, both of 1911 N. Fife St.; Donald Y. Hall, 19, Fife, and Sharon Ann Mulkey, 519 Washington, both of Orting; Fred A. Vanzee and Donna F. Pavich, both of 1908 39th St. E., Sumner; Ronald A. Martin, and Beverly A. McCarthy, 1908 39th St. E., Sumner; Donald E. Rose, Gwynedon, Pa., and Renate H. Sattler, 1902 Clover Creek Drive, and Cheryl A. Ross, 708 Summit Ave., Paul D. Hutt and Sandra L. Dolan, both of 402 E. 64th; Ivan T. Carmichael, 709 Pine E. 56, and Cynthia A. Hamm, 1304 Kirkwood Ave., both of Puyallup; Jack D. Hamilton Jr., and Janice Woods, 401 S. Fife St.; Sterling P. Eaves, Point Ignace, Can., and Anna C. Hogan, Alaska; Gene D. Brookes, 9002 Sales Road, Patrick H. Brookes, 913 E. 64th St., and Joni M. Goodwin, 4701 35th Ave. E.; Ronald E. Hall, 4701 35th Ave. E., Fircrest, and Sandra J. Sides, 7501 4th Ave.; Stephen E. Sawyer, 4614 Ainsworth Ave., and Sharon L. Hall, 507 S. Birmingham Loop.; Robert C. Clarke and Marilyn T. Weaver, both of Seattle; Robert G. Hutt, 402 E. 64 St.

Ruston_3.jpg

Ruston_2.jpg

Ruston.jpg

front corner.

corner.

detail, window.

detail, bricks.

detail, entryway.

front corner.

Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Ruston School Property ID: 103709

Inventory Details - 12/17/2009

Common name:

Date recorded: 12/17/2009

Field Recorder: Susan Johnson, Katie Chase, Artifacts Consulting

Field Site number: 4655200190

SHPO Determination

Detail Information

Characteristics:

Category	Item
Plan	Irregular
Structural System	Wood - Platform Frame
Foundation	Concrete - Poured
Cladding	Brick
Roof Type	Flat with Eaves

Styles:

Period	Style Details
Early 20th Century Revivals (1900-1940)	Colonial Revival

Surveyor Opinion

Property appears to meet criteria for the National Register of Historic Places: No

Property is located in a potential historic district (National and/or local): No

Significance narrative: The building at 5219 Shirley Street in Ruston is a business. This resource is significant locally under Criterion C for the integrity of its architectural character.

Physical description: The building at 5219 Shirley Street is located in Ruston, Washington. The structure was built in 1951 (according to the county assessor) in the Colonial style. The building has an irregular plan and stands on a poured concrete foundation. The 2-story platform frame building has a flat with eaves roof clad in unknown. The walls are clad in brick veneer. There appear to be slight alterations to the original plan. There appear to be slight alterations to the original cladding. There appear to be slight alterations to the original windows. There are changes to the portico.

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Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Ruston School

Property ID: 103709

Inventory Details - 7/6/2011

Common name:

Date recorded: 7/6/2011

Field Recorder: Artifacts Consulting, Inc.

Field Site number: 4655200190

SHPO Determination

Detail Information

Characteristics:

Category	Item
Structural System	Wood - Platform Frame
Form Type	Commercial

Surveyor Opinion

Property appears to meet criteria for the National Register of Historic Places: No

Physical description: The building at 5219 Shirley Street, Ruston, is located in Pierce County. According to the county assessor, the structure was built in 1951 and is a school. Also according to the county assessor, the structure was remodeled in 1965. The 1-story, platform frame building has a roof clad in an unknown material. The walls of the commercial form are clad principally in an unknown material.

Historic Property Report

Historic Name: Ruston School

Property ID: 103709

Inventory Details - 6/26/2024

Common name: Mary Joyce Community Center

Date recorded: 6/26/2024

Field Recorder: Maureen Elenga

Field Site number:

SHPO Determination

Detail Information

Styles:

Period	Style Details
Early 20th Century Revivals (1900-1940)	Italian Renaissance Revival

Surveyor Opinion

Property appears to meet criteria for the National Register of Historic Places: No